

## **Staff Report – Agenda Items 5B and 5C**

# **Lake Valley State Recreation Area Classification Adjustment and General Plan Amendment and Washoe Meadows State Park Classification Adjustment Upper Truckee River Restoration and Golf Course Reconfiguration Final Environmental Impact Report/EIS/EIS**

## **I. CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS RECOMMENDATION**

California State Parks recommends the Commission review and consider the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) document, and adopt the resolution to approve the Classification Adjustment and General Plan Amendment for Lake Valley State Recreation Area (SRA) and the Classification Adjustment for Washoe Meadows State Park, which are required as part of the implementation of the Upper Truckee River Restoration and Golf Course Reconfiguration Project (the Project).

## **II. INTRODUCTION**

Lake Valley State Recreation Area and Washoe Meadows State Park are adjoining State Park System units in the Lake Tahoe Basin (See Figure 2 on page 16 of this report). The two units occupy about 784 acres<sup>1</sup> in the scenic valley of the Upper Truckee River, near the community of Meyers roughly 3.5 miles south of South Lake Tahoe, within El Dorado County (See Figure 1 on page 15).

Lake Valley State Recreation Area's 173.4 acres border about 1.2 miles of the Upper Truckee River. It's eastern boundary is U.S. Highway 50, the principal route traveled by visitors to South Lake Tahoe and the surrounding vacationlands. Lake Valley's major feature is the 18-hole regulation length Lake Tahoe Golf Course. During snowy winter months, cross country skiers and snowshoers recreate here, and snowmobiles use a track on the golf course's driving range.

Washoe Meadows State Park's 608 acres are west of Lake Valley State Recreation Area. The park includes about one mile of the river. Angora Creek, a tributary of the Upper Truckee River, flows through meadows that give the park its name before joining the river within Lake Valley State Recreation Area. Stands of lodgepole and Jeffrey pine fringe the park's meadows and uplands. During summer, anglers, kayakers, and swimmers enjoy the Upper Truckee River. Hikers, bicyclists, joggers, and equestrians use old roads and trails in the park during summer, while skiers and snowshoers enjoy the park in the winter. Washoe Meadows State Park is undeveloped, with no signage, formal entrance, or facilities.

California State Parks does not estimate attendance at either Lake Valley State Recreation Area or Washoe Meadows State Park.

These lands had a history of use before their addition to the State Park System. Their forests were logged and a dairy occupied the meadows. During World War II, in an effort to increase hay production for the dairy, parts of the Upper Truckee River here were straight-

<sup>1</sup> Estimates of sizes, lengths, or quantities at Lake Valley State Recreation Area and Washoe Meadows State Park are more finalized in the FEIR, but may vary slightly, such as in the Lake Valley State Recreation Area general plan, because of improved measurement technology and more detailed field surveys.

ened to improve drainage and reduce flooding of the meadows. In the 1950s and early 1960s, several areas were mined for sand and gravel, and the golf course was constructed. A drag strip also operated in the meadows. Residential subdivision separated the lands from nearby U.S. Forest Service wildlands and sewer and power lines were extended through the property. The property was slated for development as Lake Valley Estates, which included a second golf course, condominiums, and homes until, after a period of litigation that took place during the formation of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), the site was purchased by the Wildlife Conservation Board for \$5 million and transferred to California State Parks in 1985.

### III. PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION

In 1987 the State Park and Recreation Commission classified and named the Lake Valley Estates property, dividing it into two units, Lake Valley State Recreation Area and Washoe Meadows State Park. To allow for continuing the operation of the Lake Tahoe Golf Course, it was encompassed within the state recreation area. The remainder of the property was classified as a state park because it contained “areas with outstanding values of statewide significance and areas capable of being restored to such values.”

The purpose of Lake Valley State Recreation Area is:

*To make available to the people for their enjoyment and inspiration the 18-hole golf course, and the scenic Upper Truckee River and its environs. The department shall balance the objectives of providing optimum recreational opportunities and maintaining the highest standards of environmental protection. In so doing, the department shall define and execute a program of management within the unit that shall perpetuate the unit's declared values, providing for golfing along with other compatible summer and winter recreation opportunities while restoring the natural character and ecological values of the upper Truckee River, protecting its water quality, and protecting and interpreting significant natural, cultural, and scientific values.*

The purpose of Washoe Meadows State Park is:

*To preserve and protect a wet meadow area associated with the Angora Creek and the Upper Truckee River at the southwestern side of the Lake Tahoe basin. The unit's associated forest areas sustain Jeffery pine and lodgepole pine. (An exceptionally large lodgepole pine was also recognized in the original 1988 statement of purpose. Since the time the unit was established, the tree fell as a result of natural processes.) The unit contains fourteen Native American occupancy sites and remnants of an historic dairy, and is contiguous to other public lands important for their open space values and recreational uses. California State Parks will preserve, protect, restore, interpret and manage the unit's natural, cultural, and aesthetic resources, features and values, making them available to the public for their educational, inspirational and recreational benefits.*

The Commission adopted a general plan for Lake Valley State Recreation Area in 1988. The plan states that “...classification as state recreation areas recognizes the significance of the unit in perpetuating an existing quality public golfing opportunity...”

The Lake Valley SRA general plan also states that the major focus of resource management for the State Recreation Area will be the restoration, enhancement, and long-term protection of the Upper Truckee River, and calls for preparation of a river management plan to restore a more natural channel configuration, control unnatural bank erosion and to restore riparian habitat along the Upper Truckee River. The general plan also recommended that

the existing 18-hole championship golf course be continued.

No general plan has been prepared for Washoe Meadows State Park.

#### **IV. UPPER TRUCKEE RIVER RESTORATION & GOLF COURSE RECONFIGURATION**

In the 1990s, California State Parks initiated studies to evaluate how to best restore the Upper Truckee River, as called for in the unit's general plan. The river, Lake Tahoe's largest tributary, drains a watershed of roughly 56 square miles. From its headwaters in wilderness along the Sierra Nevada crest, it flows north for ten miles before reaching Washoe Meadows State Park and Lake Valley State Recreation Area. The river continues through the units and flows five miles north to Lake Tahoe, discharging to the lake adjacent to the Tahoe Keys in South Lake Tahoe. A 2003 study by the National Sedimentation Lab states: "The Upper Truckee River is the greatest contributor of suspended and fine-grained sediment in the Lake Tahoe Basin" and "sediment delivery from the Upper Truckee River could be significantly reduced by controlling stream bank erosion in the reaches adjacent to the Lake Tahoe Golf Course." The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, in cooperation with the Upper Truckee River Watershed Advisory Group, identified the reach of the Upper Truckee through the park and SRA as the greatest opportunity for rehabilitation among all the river reaches in their *Upper Truckee River Upper Reach Environmental Assessment Report* (Swanson Hydrology and Geomorphology 2003) because public ownership by California State Parks presented an opportunity for full restoration of a large reach of the river.

A draft of a river management plan was initiated in 2000, but was never completed in favor of taking a more comprehensive approach to evaluating river restoration opportunities. This watershed evaluation identified the river through the park and SRA as one of the two worst contributors of sediment to the Upper Truckee that degrade the quality of Lake Tahoe's water (Swanson Hydrology + Geomorphology 2003 and River Run Consulting 2006). They reported that the river channel at the park and SRA was eroding, incising into the river bottom and eating into its banks, impairing habitat for trout and other aquatic life. Downcutting of the river was also lowering the water table that supports riverside willows and aspens, damaging their value for songbirds and other wildlife. Without a riparian buffer between the golf course and river, fertilizer and other pollutants could run off more easily, increasing threats to water quality. In addition, the river overflows less frequently onto its floodplain limiting deposition of fine sediment out of the Upper Truckee and recharge of aquifers that sustain the park's meadows. Instead, the sediment suspended in the river and eroding from its bottom and banks is carried down the river, smothering trout spawning gravels and flowing into Lake Tahoe, where it reduces water clarity.

To rectify these problems, State Parks is proposing to restore the reach of the Upper Truckee River within Lake Valley State SRA and Washoe Meadows SP (the Project) to reduce its contributions of fine sediment to the river and Lake Tahoe and to improve riparian habitat. The Project was selected after analysis, including consideration of public comments, through an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS/EIS) process. California State Parks is the lead agency for this EIR under CEQA. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency ("TRPA") is the lead agency under the TRPA Compact. The planning process and EIR/EIS/EIS focused on a 520-acre study area for the Project that includes the southern portion of the Washoe Meadows State Park, all of Lake Valley State Recreation Area, and small portions of U.S. Forest Service and Tahoe Conservancy lands, including a 1.5 mile reach of the Up-

per Truckee River through the park and state recreation area.

The Project's primary purpose is to restore natural geomorphic and ecological processes along this reach of river, improve riparian habitat, and to reduce the river's suspended sediment discharge to Lake Tahoe. Four alternative approaches to implementing the proposed project have been considered, along with the No Project/No Action Alternative. During the early stages of the EIR/EIS/EIS preparation, two alternative considerations arose based on public input: Evaluation of alternative locations for golf course development and addition of an alternative that involves decommissioning of the golf course and full restoration of the SRA to riparian and meadow habitat. The EIR/EIS/EIS evaluated three alternative golf course reconfiguration concepts: Reduced play (9-hole or executive course), reconfigured 18-hole regulation, and no golf course. Two alternative river management approaches were assessed: Geomorphic restoration and stabilization of the river banks in place, and a No-Project/No-Action alternative. These five alternatives represent a reasonable range of restoration approaches, golf course facility levels, and public access.

A preferred alternative has been proposed as the project after the consideration of public comments on the project and draft EIR/EIS/EIS. The preferred alternative, a slight variation of Alternative 2 of the EIR/EIS/EIS, involves restoration of the Upper Truckee River and reconfiguration of the Lake Tahoe Golf Course away from the river to make room along the river corridor for restoration actions and a buffer between the golf course and the river. This would involve relocation of a portion of the golf course to less environmentally sensitive areas more distant from the river (See Figures 3 and 4 of this report and Exhibit 2-3 on page 2-25 of the Project's Final EIR). The Project would lengthen the river's channel by about 1,600 feet by reincorporating old river channels, still visible in the SRA and park, that were cut off in the 1940s and 50s and by constructing new channels to create a slower, more meandering river. The river's bed would be elevated about two feet on average throughout this reach using grade control structures and new riffles placed in the river channel. To shade the new channel, willows, and other riparian vegetation will be planted and large woody debris will be placed along the banks, improving conditions for trout and other species. Rock or sheetpile will be installed where needed to protect nearby sewer lines. After the new channel is established, about a half mile of the current channel will be filled and other areas would be excavated to reconnect about 32 acres of floodplain and meadow, nearly doubling riparian habitat within the park and SRA.

Restoration of the river, floodplain, and habitat requires reconfiguration of the existing 18-hole regulation golf course to allow room for the river. Several holes near the river would be removed and replaced by new holes extending west from the current course into areas that are currently within Washoe Meadows State Park. About 92.5 acres within the park, or about 15 percent of the current park, would be reclassified and added to Lake Valley State Recreation Area. About 60 acres of the land added to the SRA will be developed for the golf course. The remainder will remain in native vegetation, undeveloped except for hiking and riding trails. Approximately 45 acres of the current golf course along the river would be removed, restored, and reclassified as state park. The resulting net reduction in the park's size after the reclassification is 40 acres (a reduction of 6.5 percent).

## **V. CLASSIFICATION ADJUSTMENT AND GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT**

Relocation of the golf holes and restoration of the river cannot occur without adjustment of the classification of property at the park and SRA and amendment of the Lake Valley State Recreation Area general plan. Development of new golf courses is not permitted in a state park, because Public Resources Code 5019.53, which describes the state park classifica-

tion, provides in part:

Improvements that do not directly enhance the public's enjoyment of the natural, scenic, cultural, or ecological values of the resource, which are attractions in themselves, or which are otherwise available to the public within a reasonable distance outside the park, shall not be undertaken within state parks.

A golf course primarily attracts people to recreate on it, rather than to enjoy a unit's natural resources. Golf is permitted in state recreation areas, on the other hand, because Public Resources Code Section 5019.56 provides, in part:

State recreation units consist of areas selected, developed, and operated to provide outdoor recreational opportunities... Improvements may be undertaken to provide for recreational activities, including, *but not limited to*, camping, picnicking, swimming, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, boating, waterskiing, diving, winter sports, fishing, and hunting (emphasis added).

About 92.5 acres of the park would be transferred to the SRA, including about 60 acres that would be occupied by the relocated golf course's footprint. The proposal before the Commission would reclassify these lands as part of Lake Valley State Recreation Area.

At the same time, about 52.5 acres of river, riparian habitat, floodplain and meadow currently within the SRA that will be restored by the Project would be added to the state park. This is proposed because Public Resources Code 5019.53 provides that:

State parks are to consist of areas of outstanding scenic or natural character, oftentimes also containing significant historical, archaeological, ecological, geological, or other similar values.

In addition, Section 5019.56's description of SRAs instructs that:

Areas containing ecological, geological, scenic, or cultural resources of significant value shall be preserved within state wildernesses, state reserves, state parks, or natural or cultural preserves, rather than in an SRA.

The new boundaries of the units after the reclassification are shown in the *General Plan Amendment for Lake Valley State Recreation Area and Washoe Meadows Classification Adjustment* (see also Figures 3 and 4 of this report). After adjustment in the two units' classification, Lake Valley SRA will include 213 acres, about 23 more than at present, and Washoe Meadows State Park will include 568 acres, about 6.5 percent less than at present.

The complete amendment of the Lake Valley SRA general plan is presented in Attachment A. It describes how reconfiguration of the golf course helps attain the SRA's purpose by continuing to provide golf recreation while protecting and restoring the Upper Truckee River and conserving the site's other natural and cultural resources.

## **VI. PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS**

The Project, including the adjustment in these units' classifications and the general plan amendment, has been controversial and newsworthy. As part of the EIR/EIS/EIS for the Project and other studies noted above, outreach efforts have included public noticing, scoping meetings, recreation planning workshops, public tours of the study area, and public meetings and hearings during review of the draft EIR/EIS/EIS, as well as numerous other small group and individual outreach efforts throughout the life of the project. A website

([www.RestoreUpperTruckee.net](http://www.RestoreUpperTruckee.net)) that provides information on the Project was also launched in 2006 and updated throughout the Project to keep interested parties informed. The initial definition of alternatives was supplemented as a result of the public scoping process and early public planning workshops, which demonstrates the influence of public input. Several public information documents were also distributed including two newsletters in 2007 and shorter newsnotes in 2009 and 2010. A pamphlet was prepared for 2010 meetings and a door knob hanger was distributed to nearby residences in the summer of 2010.

The public meetings conducted for the Project include the following:

2006: Four public scoping meetings to initiate the EIR/EIS/EIS process (September 2006). The Notice of Preparation for the scoping described four alternatives, including a “no action” alternative. It described Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative, but also stated that all alternatives would be analyzed at an equal level of detail. In response to public input during the scoping period, State Parks prepared its draft EIR without selecting a preferred alternative and added a fifth alternative of decommissioning the golf course. Relocation of the golf course to a site outside State Parks’ property was also added to the analysis.

2007: Two public planning workshops (February 2007). These workshops included four group exercises, including public input on existing recreation uses, and requesting input for Alternatives 2, 3 and 5 (Alternative 4 would remain same as existing).

2008: Two public site tours (June 2008)

2010: Three public information meetings (Lake Tahoe Golf Course clubhouse and Meyers Community meeting, August and September 2010), Two public site tours (September 2010), Public open house (Lake Tahoe Golf Course clubhouse September 2010); TRPA Advisory Planning Commission and Governing Board public meetings on the draft EIR/EIS/EIS, October 2010).

In addition, California State Parks consulted with the Washoe Indian tribe regarding protection of cultural resources.

The mailing list for the project has grown to 929 names. 737 comments have been received on the EIR/EIS/EIS.

## **VII. RELATIONSHIP OF COMMISSION ACTION ON THE CLASSIFICATION ADJUSTMENTS AND GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT to the SUBSEQUENT APPROVALS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT**

The Commission will first consider approval of the Classification Adjustments and then the General Plan Amendment. Subsequent implementation of the Project is contingent on action by three agencies: California State Parks, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. If the Commission approves the General Plan Amendment and Classification Adjustments, the Director will consider and act on the proposed Preferred Alternative for State Parks. If the Director approves the proposed Preferred Alternative, TRPA will then consider the adequacy of the environmental document and approval of the proposed Preferred Alternative. If TRPA approves the proposed Preferred Alternative, the Bureau of Reclamation will then consider the adequacy of the environmental document under NEPA and approval of the proposed Preferred Alternative.

The golf course reconfiguration and river restoration aspects are linked, and although implementation may be phased over several years, both are necessary. Restoration of the

river requires room where natural processes can be restored, including a buffer area to enhance the river's riparian corridor. To create the room needed for restoration, it is necessary to reconfigure the golf course by moving golf holes from the river corridor. Implementation for both river and golf course construction will also be linked, and funding will need to be acquired for both portions before construction begins.

## **VIII. ISSUES AND ANALYSIS**

The Project best meets the intentions of the general plan by balancing ecological and geomorphic restoration of the river with maintaining the golf recreation.

### **A. Park Resources Are Protected**

The reconfigured units and amended general plan provide full protection of the park and the SRA's significant resources. These resources, documented in the *Lake Country Estates Project Resource Summary* (1987) that supported the site's initial classification and the EIR, include:

**Wet Meadows** - The wet meadows currently protected within Washoe Meadows State Park are generally unaffected by the reclassification. Protection of other wet meadows will increase as those bordering the Upper Truckee will be incorporated within the park's revised boundaries, consistent with the park's purpose. Some areas of dry meadow now protected within Washoe Meadows State Park will be reclassified as part of the SRA. These dry meadows include previously disturbed sites and other areas that are less environmentally significant and more common in the Project area and Lake Tahoe than the wet meadow areas being increased and protected within the park.

**Ponderosa and Jeffrey pine forests** - Over 90 percent of the pine forests in Washoe Meadows State Park will remain protected within the park and will not be affected by the Project. About 45 acres of second and third growth pine forests, roughly nine percent of the site's pine forests, will be reclassified as part of the SRA and removed when the golf course is constructed. These forests include areas previously disturbed by logging and sand and gravel quarries that are less environmentally significant than those protected in the park. Relocated golf holes would be sited to minimize removal of trees, especially trees greater than 30 inches in diameter (DBH), by placing new holes in relatively open areas previously disturbed by logging and gravel mining to the maximum extent feasible. Tree removal that cannot be avoided will be mitigated through a tree removal and management plan.

To compare habitats within the park units, State Parks used California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (CWHR), a state-of-the-art information system for California's wildlife, developed cooperatively by the University of California, Berkeley, and the California Department of Fish and Game. The CWHR habitat system uses the combination of plant species, size, and density to classify habitats. The results demonstrate that the pine forest and chaparral habitat to be removed for relocation of the golf course are common and widespread, while the wet meadows and riparian areas that will be restored are scarcer and more critical to wildlife.

**Upper Truckee River and its riparian habitats** - Most of the Upper Truckee River, Angora Creek, and their associated riparian habitats will be restored and protected within the park. The Project will also restore the 850 linear feet of river that will remain in the SRA where the golf course connects across the river. Restoration of the river will increase its value as a habitat for trout and other aquatic life and improve the quality of its water. The riparian habitats along the river and creek will be enlarged, improving habitat for songbirds and other

wildlife, and will provide a buffer between these waterways and the reconfigured golf course, reducing risks that water running off the golf course may degrade the river. For example, the length of golf course within 50 feet or less of the river will be reduced by 87 percent, from the present 6,382 linear feet to 850 feet (see exhibits 4-1 and 4-2 in the Final EIR on pages 4-121 to 4-123), and the golf course area in the sensitive stream environment zone will decrease 25 percent, from the present 128 acres to 96 acres. Restoration of the river would result in the river regaining important natural processes, such as occupying a wider meander belt and overflowing the adjacent floodplain more frequently, depositing sediment and recharging the groundwater.

In addition, the Project that the reclassification and general plan amendment make possible provides a more connected wildlife corridor along the Upper Truckee River by moving golf holes away from the river and improving connectivity to nearby wildlife habitats. Because neighborhoods east and west of the park separate its habitat from nearby U.S. Forest Service lands, relocating golf holes on the west side of the river will not significantly fragment habitat or prevent wildlife travel along the river.

**Cultural resources** - Archaeological sites and several historic buildings within Washoe Meadows State Park were cited as the properties' principal cultural resources in the 1987 resource summary. State Parks resurveyed the park in 2004 and inventoried a total of 22 archaeological sites including historic buildings and other features. Eighteen of these archaeological sites, including all the historic features, will remain within the reconfigured park. Three archaeological sites that are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places will be within the reconfigured SRA. The golf course alignment proposed in the general plan avoids one of these to protect its grinding stone and other materials. The others are tool making sites. None of these sites are associated with important historical events or people or are unique works of a master artist or craftsman, but their potential to yield information about Washoe Indian and other cultures makes them eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

The archaeological sites within the reconfigured State Recreation Area's boundaries are not so significant that they would typically warrant protection within a cultural preserve. The Commission and State Parks use preserves to provide special protection for only the most extraordinary archaeological sites and historic buildings, rather than for every resource qualifying for the National Register of Historic Places. Many SRAs hold archaeological sites similar to those here that are outside of a cultural preserve, such as at Folsom State Recreation Area and Tahoe State Recreation Area. The archaeological sites' value in contributing to understanding of Washoe and other Indian cultures will instead be protected by mitigation measures described in Section 3.9 of the draft EIR/EIS/EIS and Section 3.6 of the final EIR/EIS/EIS, including relocating the golf course away from the grinding rock and by carefully covering the tool making sites with fill to protect them from disturbance. These mitigation measures have been approved by the State Historic Preservation Officer.

The Washoe Tribe, in comments on the DEIR, expressed its dissatisfaction with these mitigation measures. Its comments that are relevant to the adjustment in the units' classification and the general plan amendment are that the golf course's construction, including the covering of tool making sites and the golf recreation near the grinding stone, will reduce tribal members' access to these sites. Their comments express concern that their access to the site will depend on the good will of the golf course concessionaire and that encapsulating the toolmaking sites will eliminate both access to those sites and the evidence they provide of the Washoe's presence at the site.



These adjustments in the classification of the park and SRA are consistent with the purposes for which the units were established and with the applicable sections of Public Resources Code (PRC). After the exchange, the most outstanding scenic and natural features of the properties and their significant ecological, scenic, and cultural resources – the wet meadows, pine forests, Angora Creek, most of the Truckee River, archaeological sites and historic buildings – will be protected within the state park and the ecosystems of both the SRA and the park will be managed together to restore, protect, and maintain their natural values, as provided in PRC Sections 5019.53 & 5019.56 (a).

In response to the Washoe tribe's comments on the EIR, the general plan amendment also adds a policy to the Lake Valley SRA general plan's resource element directing the department to develop a cultural resources preservation plan that includes creation of a cultural preserve to conserve portions of the SRA containing the grinding stone and its environs. The preserve will protect the site's outstanding cultural values, consistent with PRC Section 5019.74, including providing for appropriate access to the site by tribal members and recognizing the tribe's connection to the SRA's landscape, as requested in its comment letter. The resource values of the other archaeological sites in the SRA will be protected effectively with mitigation measures proposed in the EIR.

## **B. Recreation Opportunities Are Provided**

The reconfigured units and amended general plan provide appropriate recreation opportunities to Lake Tahoe visitors and residents, consistent with the purposes for which the units were established. Roughly 2.5 million visitors travel to South Lake Tahoe annually. Outdoor recreation is among the primary reasons they select the area as a vacation destination, exceeding gaming, and other man-made attractions. The SRA, with its location along U.S. 50, the major route of travel for visitors to the greater Tahoe Basin, is important to South Lake Tahoe, signaling visitors' arrival at this scenic vacationland.

The affordable public golf provided by the SRA's Lake Tahoe Golf Course is an important contributor to the region's outdoor recreation. Golf is enjoyed by roughly 12 percent of residents in the Central Valley and Bay area and 14 percent of Los Angeles residents, primary origins of South Lake Tahoe visitors.

Visitors to the SRA enjoy roughly 30,000 rounds of golf annually at the Lake Tahoe Golf Course, with over two thirds of these rounds played by visitors to the region. The existing golf course, featuring 18 regulation length holes, is referred to as a "championship" course. The course is generally fully booked during prime summer hours. Lake Tahoe Golf Course users especially appreciate its convenience, the 18-hole, regulation course, and its scenic beauty, which is enhanced by the SRA's views of the High Sierra and the Upper Truckee River. For some visitors, the hope that golf balls driven in the thin mountain air will travel farther adds a special thrill to golfing at Lake Valley State Recreation Area. The course also provides an important setting for local events, including golf tournaments for high school and community college teams, charity fundraisers, family gatherings, weddings, and corporate meetings. The Project will retain a reconfigured golf course that features a par and yardage approximately the same as the existing course, protecting this important recreation opportunity.

Affordability is an important attribute of the Lake Tahoe Golf Course. Consistent with its public ownership, green fees are reasonably priced, less than other privately-owned regulation-length courses nearby. Through its concession agreement, California State Parks limits the golf fees at Lake Tahoe Golf Course to \$84 per round, in comparison to \$200 to

\$240 per round at Edgewood, the nearest 18-hole regulation course on Lake Tahoe's south shore. In a survey of Lake Tahoe Golf Course's users undertaken as part of the Project's feasibility studies, about 37 percent of golfers report that price was important in their decision to play golf there. This is not surprising given that 42 percent of visitors to Lake Tahoe's South Shore have combined household incomes of \$70,000 or less. Golfers attending meetings about the Project have commented that they would like continuation of a regulation 18-hole course at an affordable price.

State Parks evaluated the economics of alternative ways to provide golf recreation at the SRA (*Lake Tahoe Golf Course Economic Feasibility Report*, Appendix E in the EIR), including a golf course with a reduced play area, such as an executive, par-3 course or a nine-hole course. This evaluation found that a golf course with a reduced play area would produce marginal revenues for a concessionaire and so would be susceptible to closure, making the Project infeasible under all but the most optimistic of circumstances. Because the Tahoe Paradise Golf Course, located about 2 miles from the SRA, already provides a reduced play golf course, developing an executive, par-3 course or a nine-hole course at the SRA would duplicate and compete with this existing recreation opportunity.

In addition to golf, Lake Valley State Recreation Area and Washoe Meadows State Park also provide valued opportunities for other summer and winter recreation. Currently, the park has an informal network of inherited logging and quarry roads adopted as trails by hikers, bicyclists, joggers, and equestrians. The existing golf course bridges over the river, however, are closed to hikers or equestrians due to safety hazards of errant golf balls. A survey of trail users during summer 2006 and 2007 showed that 86 percent of trail users were from neighborhoods surrounding the park.

The Project will continue to improve the park's and SRA's trails. Reconfiguration of the golf course authorized by the adjustment of the units' classification and the general plan amendment will allow roughly 1.1 miles of trails and a new bridge over the Truckee River to be developed. This would allow visitors arriving via U.S. 50 to enjoy hiking or riding from the golf course clubhouse, along and across the newly restored river, and north to the park's forests and meadows. Local residents will be able to connect from adjoining neighborhoods through the units to the El Dorado County's Sawmill Bike Path (Exhibit 2-4 on page 2-35 of the Final EIR), enhancing opportunities for longer distance walking, running, or biking. These new trails will replace the 3,300 feet of unmanaged, user-created trail that would be removed by the project.

During winter, the new trails will be available for snowshoers and cross country skiers. The existing snowmobile track on the driving range at the SRA will remain.

Anglers and boaters will also be able to recreate on additional sections of the river formerly occupied by the golf course. Fishing would be allowed on approximately 4,200 foot of river that is currently closed due to golf holes on both banks and play across the river.

The reconfigured golf course, trails, angling, boating, and snow mobile track will provide year round recreation opportunities in accordance with Public Resources Code Sections 5001.8, 5019.53, and 5019.56 (a) and the purposes for which the units were established. It fulfills the SRA's purpose by retaining an 18-hole championship course for public enjoyment, balancing the objective of providing optimum recreational and maintaining the highest standard of environmental protection. It will provide for golf and winter recreation while restoring the natural character and ecological values of the Upper Truckee River, as envisioned when the unit was created.

### **C. The clarity and quality of Lake Tahoe waters will be protected**

Lake Tahoe is a pristine jewel of nature. Surrounded on all sides by the majestic Sierra Nevada mountains, Lake Tahoe is one of the clearest lakes in the world. California's six lake-side state parks and recreation areas drew roughly 300,000 visitors in 2009-10, who came to relax outdoors, photograph the mountain scenery, picnic, hike, camp, and swim in the lake's cobalt waters. Outdoor recreationists also visit Nevada's Lake Tahoe State Park, the U.S. Forest Service's lakeside lands, and local parks. Lake Tahoe enhances visitors' experiences at all of these public lands.

Lake Tahoe is designated as an Outstanding National Resource Water, a special designation under the Clean Water Act. Only three bodies of water have this designation in the western United States: Lake Tahoe and Mono Lake in California and Crater Lake in Oregon. Forty years ago visitors could see to a depth of over 100 feet. Today, lake visitors can see only to depths of only 68 feet. Despite intensive efforts to protect and restore the lake, pollution from a variety of sources has continued to degrade its water quality. Chief among these pollutants is runoff carrying fine sediment and associated nutrients.

Among the many interstate agreements to protect the lake is the Interagency Partnership for the Lake Tahoe Ecosystem that California State Parks signed in 1997, pledging to participate in environmental improvements to protect the lake's ecosystem. The Project is an outcome of that interagency partnership and a high priority of the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP project #950). After intensive study, the restoration of the Upper Truckee River has been demonstrated to be the most effective approach to achieve the primary water quality purpose of the Project, i.e., to restore the river's natural processes and to reduce the river's contribution of fine suspended sediment to Lake Tahoe. Fine sediment deposition will also be improved by the restoration of the river's floodplain. The reconfigured golf course will be designed to modern standards incorporating best management practices to reduce impacts to water quality.

### **D. The general plan amendment ensures that the reconfigured golf course will be located on land capable of withstanding its impact, and that significant resources are protected**

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) uses a comprehensive system to assess whether a project will affect lands incapable of withstanding its impacts. The Project complies with TRPA's standards, reducing land coverage by the golf course by 2.6 acres. Because native vegetation zones are incorporated between holes to make best use of the topography and provide buffer areas for infiltration, the golf course's overall footprint will increase by 22 acres, from 134 acres to 156 acres, about 3 percent of the park and SRA. The area of fertilized and irrigated nonnative grass will decrease by 13 acres (5 percent), from 98 acres to approximately 85 acres. The area of golf course within the sensitive stream environment zone identified by the TRPA would be reduced 32 acres (35 percent), from 128 acres to 96 acres. To allow for connectivity of the golf course, two short holes would be located where the golf course crosses the river's stream environment zone. The golf course design will minimize disturbance, keeping existing topography in mind and placing wider turf areas only in main landing zones, with narrower turf areas near tees. All turf areas would be buffered using native grasses. The existing golf holes would be modified to match this style. Golf course holes remaining on the east side of the river would be reconfigured and upgraded to improve drainage, turf quality, irrigation efficiency, and the water collection system and to incorporate current best management practice (BMP) technology.

Special care has been taken to protect a fen located west of the reconfigured golf course.

The fen and related vegetation were mapped in 2008, during preparation of a vegetation map for the units. These areas were avoided when the study area for the project was selected. In 2010 and 2011 the fen was mapped again by the California Native Plant Society to verify that it is outside of and upslope of the Project. A partially subsurface drainage that flows northwest out of the fen is also outside of the project area. As described in Section 3.4 of the draft EIR/EIS/EIS, Mitigation Measure 3.4-8 (Alt. 2) will prevent golf course operations from degrading the quality of the fen's waters by routing irrigation and stormwater around landscaped areas where they will not interact with natural habitats, installing subsurface barriers or other control methods where needed to prevent groundwater interactions, and preventing percolation or surface overflow from golf course features.

A spring located west of the river will be within the area reclassified to SRA and surrounded by the golf course. No sensitive wildlife or plant species are known to occur at the spring. A buffer of natural vegetation will be retained between the golf course and this spring to prevent impacts. Upslope golf course features will be designed to hydrologically separate golf course runoff from the spring, so that no surface water or groundwater alterations to the spring would take place.

As described below, the EIR carefully analyzes the Project's effects and recommends measures to prevent and mitigate significant impacts. Because of the reduction in land coverage, the reduced intrusion within the stream environment zone, the protection of the fen and spring, and the addition of other mitigation measures to avoid or reduce adverse impacts as described in the EIR, the site will be capable of withstanding the golf course's impact.

#### **E. The Lake Tahoe Golf Course provides important economic and financial benefits**

Approval of the Project will retain the Lake Tahoe Golf Course's economic contribution to the South Lake Tahoe and Meyers community. An economic study conducted in conjunction with the EIR/EIS/EIS (Appendix E of the EIR) shows about \$6 million in visitor spending associated with golf visitors and 168 full and part time jobs at the golf course and in golf-related tourism. The revenues that State Parks receives from the golf course concessionaire exceed the state's operational cost, providing a revenue source that supports other State Park System units in the Lake Tahoe basin and elsewhere. During these times of economic downturn, high unemployment, and budget reductions that are leading to state park closures, these economic and financial benefits are important considerations in evaluating the feasibility of the Project and its alternatives.

#### **F. Neighborhood Privacy Is Protected**

Some residents of adjacent neighborhoods have objected to the placement of golf holes west of the river on land that is currently within the park. Concerns include noise from the golf course and its visibility from the neighborhood. A minimum of 300 feet separates the golf course from the closest private residential property to the west and a minimum of 100 feet separates the golf course from the closest residential property to the south. As described in Draft EIR/EIS/EIS Section 3.12, lawn mowers and the sounds associated with playing golf, such as people talking, golf ball strikes, and golf carts are noise sources associated with the Project's relocated golf holes. Lawn mowers would be the loudest source. Monitoring of existing lawn mower operation was extrapolated to Chilicothe Street residences, which are the nearest sensitive receptors and was found not to exceed noise standards for residential areas. To ensure protection of the forest that screens the golf course from the view of nearby homes, mitigation measures include implementing a landscape and forest management plan to maximize visual screening of the golf course with vegetation, while balancing vegetation management with other resource objectives, including habitat

quality and fire fuel management (see Section 3.7 in Volume II of the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS and response to comment I6-3 in Volume IV of the Final EIR/EIS/EIS).

## **IX. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)**

The General Plan Amendment is a project for the purposes of the CEQA. State Parks is the lead agency for the preparation and certification of the Final EIR, as part of a joint Final EIR/EIS/EIS satisfying CEQA, NEPA, and TRPA Compact, ordinances, and rules. Reclamation is the NEPA lead agency and TRPA is the lead agency for its procedures. The State Park and Recreation Commission is a responsible agency for purposes of the General Plan Amendment. The EIR is considered a project EIR with a comprehensive analysis of environmental impacts of the Project. The analysis is based on a concept-level plan for the Project. While variations in the details regarding the Project layout and facilities should be expected, which is normal as further design development continues, the impact analysis is intended to capture the environmental effects of those potential design refinements.

Table ES-1 in the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS summarized the environmental impacts of the Project, including all the evaluated alternatives. Several beneficial environmental effects have been identified in the EIR for the proposed Preferred Alternative (which is a variation of Alternative 2 presented in the table with the same or lesser impacts). Beneficial impacts include: natural hydrologic processes (such as overbanking), groundwater levels, reduced erosion, water quality benefits from reduced fine sediments, fish and stream aquatic habitat, Stream Environment Zone (SEZ) restoration, and riparian habitat restoration.

As also noted in Table ES-1, the Draft EIR/EIS/EIS identified impacts of the Project that have the potential to be “significant” impacts, but are mitigated to a less-than-significant level through recommended mitigation, where feasible. Potentially significant impacts that are mitigated to less than significance include: On-site storm water runoff, 100-year flood hazard, site-specific erosion risks, risk of damage to an adjacent sewer line, coarse sediment transport, water quality contamination from golf course operations, short-term habitat degradation and disturbance during construction, potential effects to special-status plants, tree removal, introduction of invasive species, short-term wildlife disturbance, potential disturbance of cultural resources, construction truck damage to local streets, construction traffic conflicts, temporary disruption of access to utilities, short-term construction air emissions, and risk of hazardous materials release during construction.

Two potentially significant environmental effects have been recognized as unavoidable: Short-term risk of turbidity in excess of water quality standards during construction, and temporary risk of turbidity in excess of water quality standards for a period after construction while the river restoration features mature and stabilize. These impacts require that the Commission, when adjusting the units’ classification and approving general plan amendment, adopt findings and a statement of overriding considerations for significant, unavoidable impacts.

## **X. OTHER LEGAL ISSUES**

There are no other known legal issues relating to the Commission’s approval of the General Plan Amendment and Classification Adjustments.

## **XI. FISCAL IMPACTS**

The Lake Tahoe Golf Course generates annual revenues to State Parks through the golf course concession. Approval of the General Plan Amendment and Classification Adjust-

ments will support implementation of the proposed Preferred Alternative, which would retain these fiscally beneficial revenues. Funds for river restoration, which is estimated to cost about \$5 million, are likely to be secured through grants. Golf course reconfiguration would likely result from negotiation of a new concession agreement for the Lake Tahoe Golf Course. If the reconfiguration was fully paid by a concessionaire, revenue to State Parks would likely be reduced for several years.

## **XII. FIGURES & ATTACHMENTS**

Figure 1 - Location Map

Figure 2 - Vicinity Map

Figure 3 - Existing Unit Boundaries

Figure 4 - Adjusted Unit Boundaries

Attachment A - ("Appendix K" of Final EIR/EIS/EIS) *Lake Valley State Recreation Area General Plan Amendment & Classification Adjustment and Washoe Meadows State Park Classification Adjustment*

## **XIII. LITERATURE CITED IN THIS REPORT**

Department of Parks and Recreation, 1987 *Lake Country Estates Resource Summary*

Department of Parks and Recreation, 1988 *Lake Valley State Recreation Area General Plan*

Department of Parks and Recreation, 2009 *Survey of Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California*

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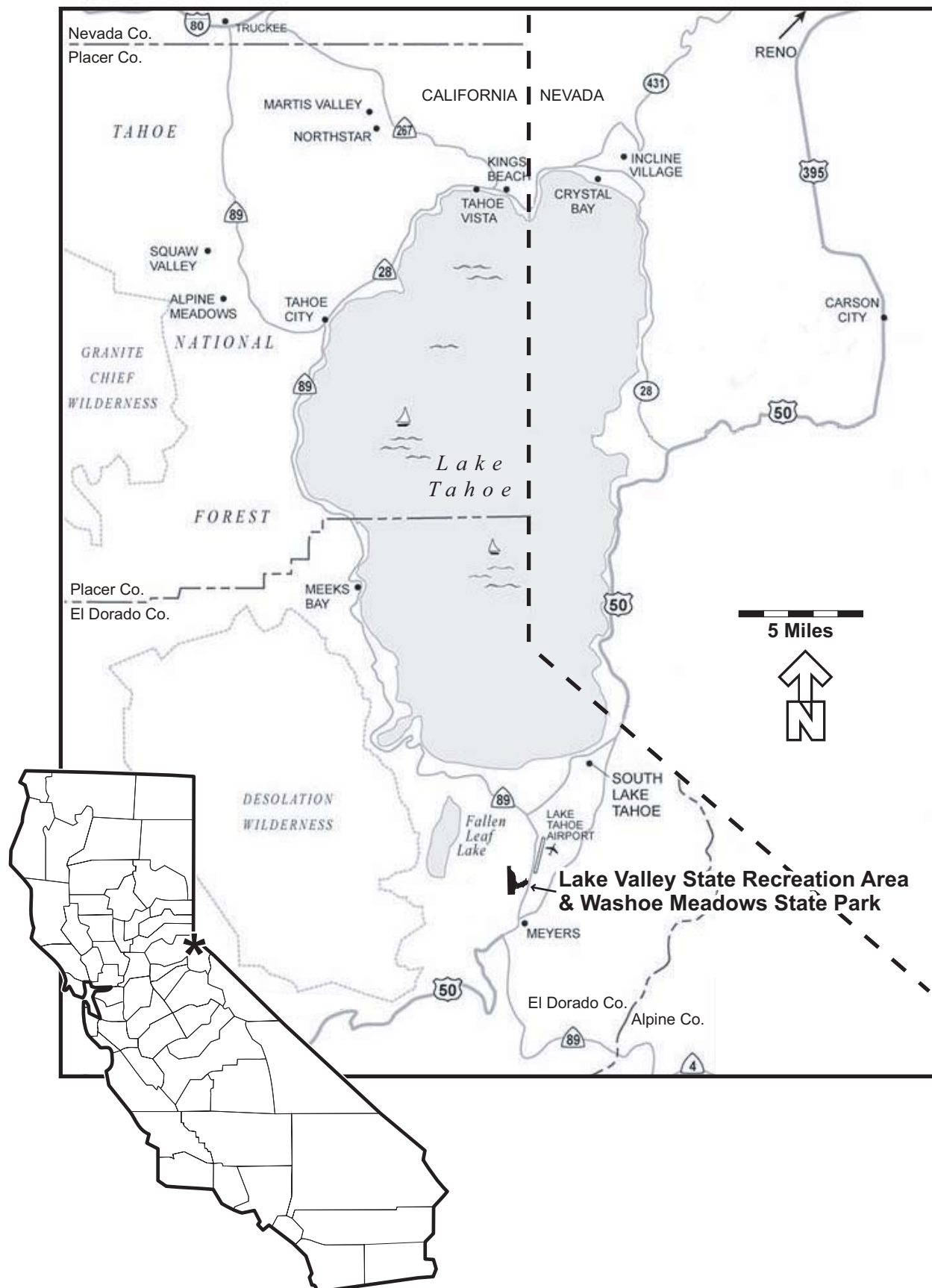
River Run Consulting, 2006 *Upper Truckee River Restoration Project Riparian Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Report*

Strategic Marketing Group, 2010 *Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority 2010 South Shore Intercept Survey*

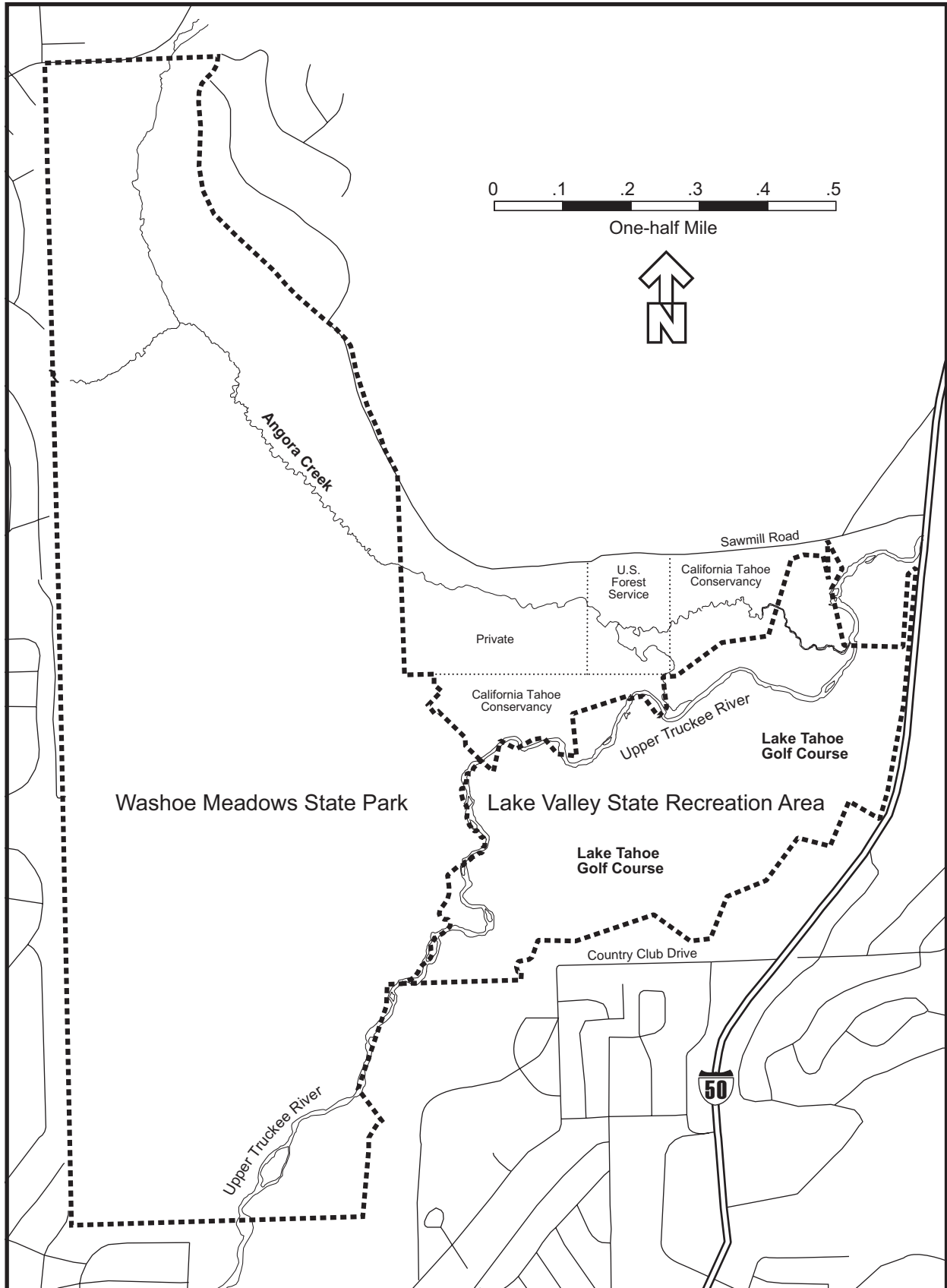
Swanson Hydrology and Geomorphology, 2003 *Upper Truckee River Upper Reach Environmental Assessment Report*

USDA Agricultural Research Service, National Sedimentation Laboratory, A. Simaon and others, 2003 *Lake Tahoe Basin Framework Study: Sediment Loadings and Channel Erosion*

**Figure 1: Location - Lake Valley State Recreation Area & Washoe Meadows State Park**

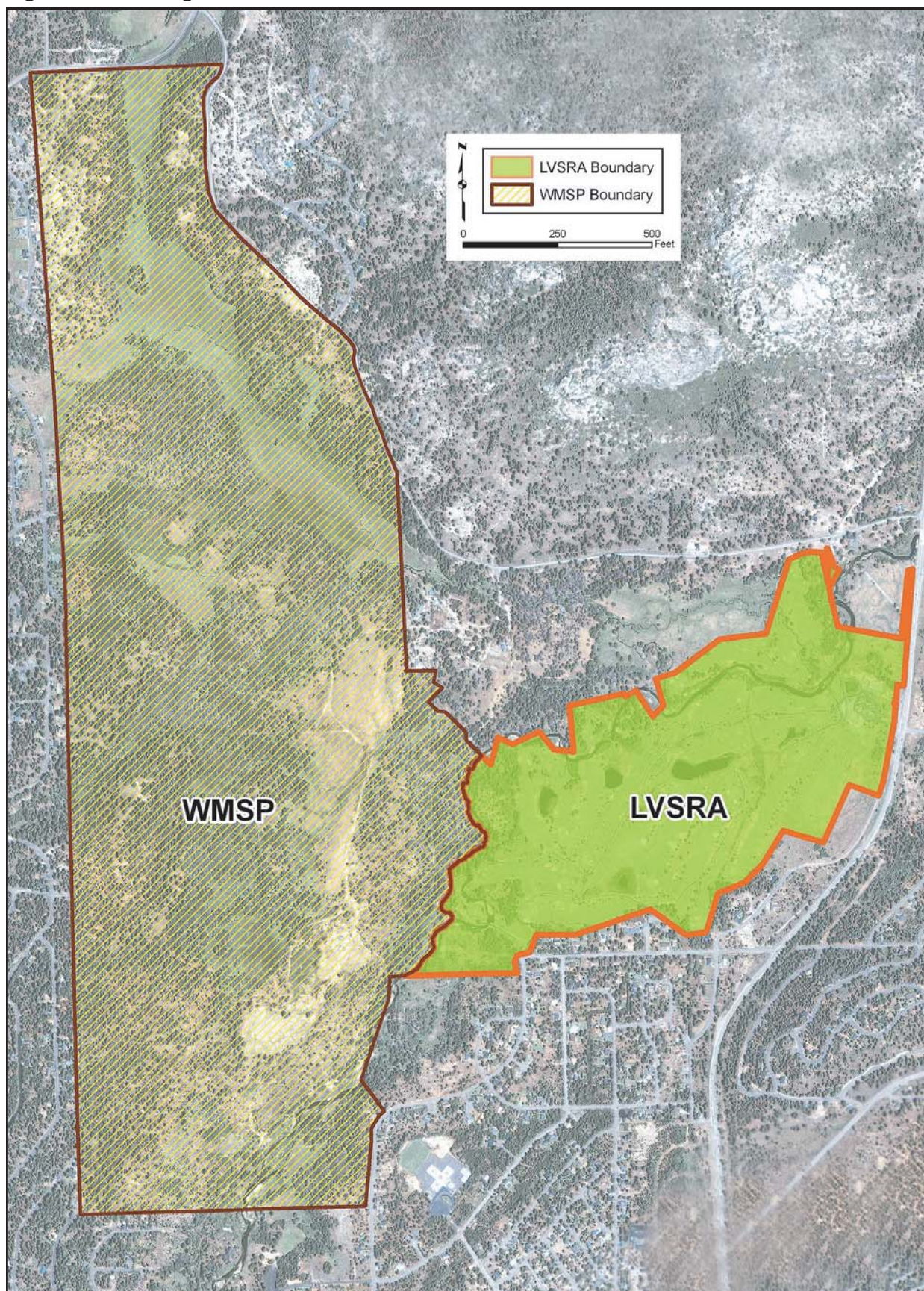


**Figure 2: Existing Boundaries - Lake Valley State Recreation Area and Washoe Meadows State Park**



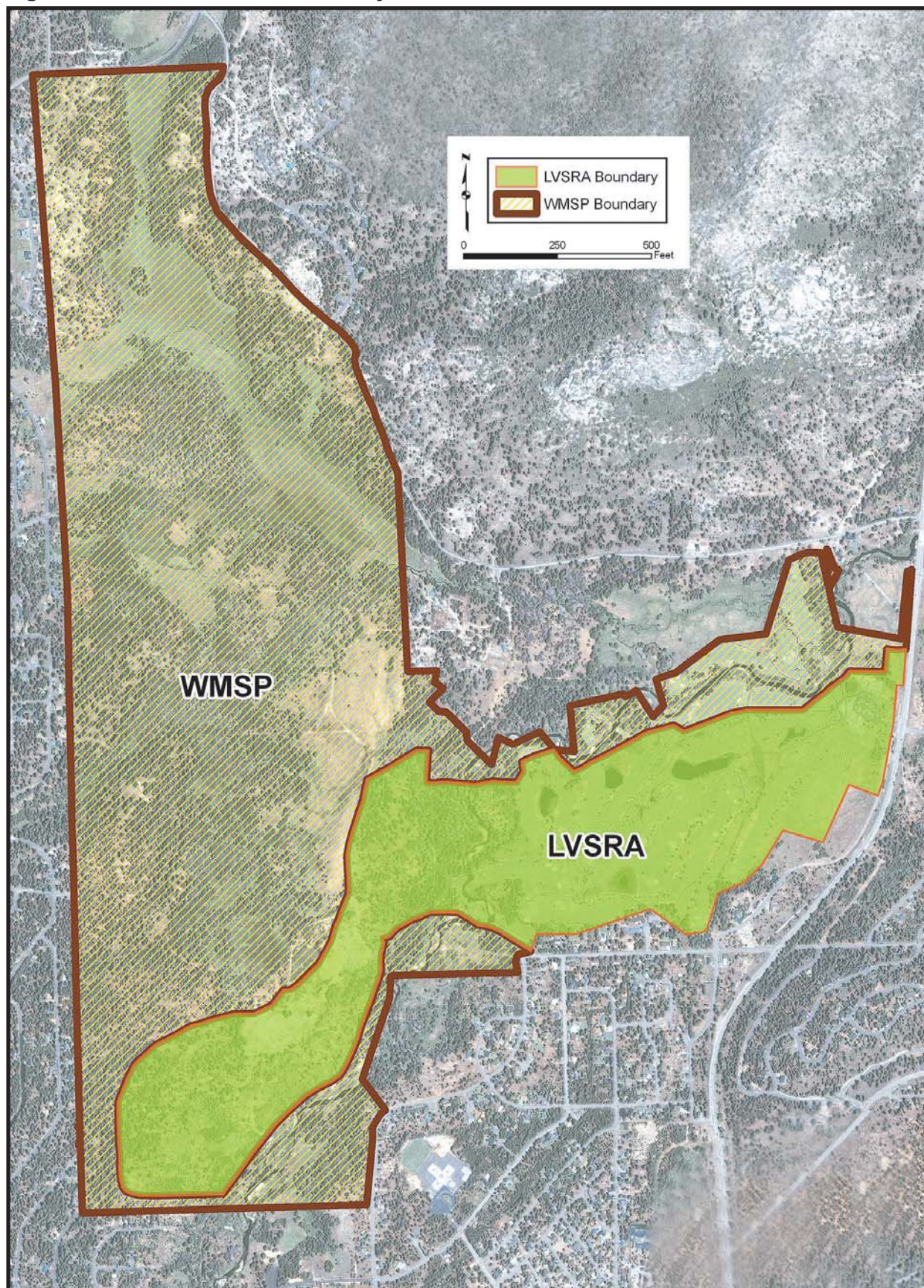


**Figure 3: Existing Unit Boundaries**





**Figure 4: Unit Boundaries After Adjustment**





# **LAKE VALLEY STATE RECREATION AREA GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND CLASSIFICATION ADJUSTMENT AND WASHOE MEADOWS STATE PARK CLASSIFICATION ADJUSTMENT**

For California State Parks (State Parks) to implement the proposed Preferred Alternative for the Upper Truckee River Restoration and Golf Course Reconfiguration Project (Project), three actions by the California Park and Recreation Commission (Commission) are necessary:

1. Adjust the classification of certain land areas at Washoe Meadows State Park (SP) and Lake Valley State Recreation Area (SRA) by modifying the boundary of the two units and,
2. Amend the General Plan for Lake Valley SRA.
3. Certify the Upper Truckee River Restoration and Golf Course Reconfiguration Project environmental document (EIR)

The Project's Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS/EIS) contains a comprehensive evaluation of a reasonable range of alternatives, including a No-Project/No-Action Alternative and four action alternatives. A refined version of Alternative 2 is proposed by State Parks as the Preferred Alternative, hereafter referred to as the Preferred Alternative, because it best meets the project's basic objectives from the evaluated alternatives. The Final EIR/EIS/EIS contains a complete description of the Preferred Alternative.

The summary descriptions of the relevant components of the Preferred Alternative, the amendment of the Lake Valley SRA General Plan, and the classification adjustments for certain lands within both Lake Valley SRA and Washoe Meadows SP that are required as part of the Project's implementation are presented below.

## **SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF RELEVANT COMPONENTS OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

The Preferred Alternative includes a reconfiguration of the existing Lake Tahoe Golf Course at LVSRA to remove several existing golf course holes located within the active floodplain-stream environment zone (SEZ), and the historic meander belt of the river and relocate them to less environmentally sensitive land on the west side of the river. Removing the golf course holes from the river corridor will allow room for the river restoration actions and create a buffer between the river and the golf course. This reach of the river has been identified as one of the largest stream sediment producers contributing to degradation of Lake Tahoe water clarity, and has been identified as a restoration priority in the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Environmental Improvement Program (EIP). The Preferred Alternative will result in the river regaining important natural geomorphic processes, such as occupying a wider meander belt, reconnecting with the adjacent floodplain, and overbanking into the active floodplain more frequently. This will, in turn, enhance critical riparian habitat and improve water quality of both the river and Lake Tahoe. While the overall footprint of the golf course will increase slightly to allow for optimal use of existing topography, most of the areas relocated will be within higher capability lands (mostly away from the river and outside of SEZ) and the area of non-native golf course turf will decrease, while turf management will be improved irrigation upgrades and more naturalized areas. The Preferred Alternative will allow the continuation of an 18-hole regulation golf course called for in the Lake Valley SRA General Plan: it calls for a reconfigured course similar to the existing golf course. The existing course is a 6740 yard par 71 course, with and the proposed golf course is a 6820 yard par 72 course. The Preferred Alternative is consistent with the purpose for which Lake Valley SRA was established (i.e., to make available to the people for their

enjoyment and inspiration the 18-hole golf course, and the scenic Upper Truckee River and its environs). It will meet geomorphic, ecological, recreational, operational, and revenue criteria, and continue to provide dispersed recreation in addition to golf recreation.

The Preferred Alternative also has economic benefits. It maintains the economic benefits to the local and regional economy, including the maintenance of golf course jobs and the beneficial multiplier effect of spending by golfers (e.g., food, lodging) which benefits businesses and provides jobs in the community. Lake Tahoe Golf Course provides an affordable golf experience in the area, with prices limited by CSP. The availability of affordable golf contributes to Tahoe's competitiveness as a vacation destination, complementing its other recreation attractions. It also maintains the revenue the state receives from the golf course concession at similar to the existing level.

The Preferred Alternative exemplifies a project that is consistent with State Parks' Mission: to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation. Restoring the Upper Truckee River helps preserve biological diversity and protect natural resources. The reconfigured golf course retains and improves high-quality, reasonably priced, golf recreation opportunities within the state recreation area. Cultural resources are protected in the design of the Preferred Alternative.

Reconfiguration of the golf course away from the river allows room for river restoration, including increasing channel length of the river, expansion of functioning floodplain, increase in riparian habitat and corridor connectivity, and other river ecosystem restoration actions. The current 11,840 foot long reach of the Upper Truckee River will be restored to 13,430 feet with at least 20 acres of additional functional floodplain area. Several golf course holes will be relocated to an area on the west side of the river that contains less sensitive land and is further distance from the river. This will also reduce the amount of SEZ occupied by the golf course (see Exhibit 2-1 and Exhibit 2-3 in the Final EIR/EIS/EIS). All five existing bridges will be removed from the Upper Truckee River and one new, longer bridge will be constructed. Four bridges will also be removed from Angora Creek. New trails will be constructed on both sides of the river. The new river bridge will be designed to accommodate both golf and other recreation use, and the new trails will tie into the Sawmill bike path, creating greater recreation connectivity.

Based on the conceptual design of the Preferred Alternative, the amount of golf course adjacent to (i.e., within 50 feet of) the Upper Truckee River will decrease from 6,382 linear feet to 850 linear feet, and the majority of the golf course will have a natural vegetated buffer width of greater than 150 feet. While an additional length of golf course will run parallel to the Upper Truckee River, it will generally be outside the active floodplain, reduce the golf course area in SEZ, and be more distant from the river. Adjoining riparian vegetation communities will be restored improving habitat connectivity as well as increasing the extent of the vegetative buffer which provides treatment areas for protection of water quality from golf course and urban land use. Treatments are also planned along the lower portion of Angora Creek and the unnamed creek to enhance those channels and adjust the confluence with the Upper Truckee River.

The conceptual 18-hole regulation golf course layout for the Preferred Alternative reconfigures Lake Tahoe Golf Course by relocating up to seven entire and two partial golf course holes to the western side of the Upper Truckee River on land currently included within Washoe Meadows SP. The reconfigured golf course will have an overall footprint of up to 155 acres (increased from the existing 134 acres), 64 acres of which will be native vegetation (minimally managed and naturalized landscape). The area of intensively managed landscape will decrease from 104 to 91 acres of (nonnative) vegetation or coverage (facilities). The overall footprint is larger to allow for optimal use of existing topography (i.e., to minimize grading) and allow for buffer areas. The area of non-native turf, however, would be decreased because a portion of existing intensively managed areas will be modified to develop new out-of-play areas of natural landscape, composed of native vegetation (scrub and grasses) that surround tees and greens. The area of golf course in SEZ will be reduced from 128 to 96 acres, and the golf course area in the 100-year floodplain will be reduced from 56 acres to 34 acres.

Approximately 850 linear feet of golf course will be adjacent to the river at the replacement bridge to allow for playability; however, the golf course design will include safety measures for trail users. An new trail is proposed where golf course is removed along the south side of the river which will tie into the new golf course bridge and into the county bike path along highway 50, providing improved connectivity. The overall plan is conceptual and final design and acreages may be modified in order to satisfy parties involved in the final decision making process. These modifications will not substantially increase the intensity or severity of an impact or create a new significant impact.

**CLASSIFICATION ADJUSTMENT**

The purpose statement for Lake Valley SRA is as follows:

The purpose of Lake Valley State Recreation Area is to make available to the people for their enjoyment and inspiration the 18-hole golf course, and the scenic Upper Truckee River and its environs.

The department shall balance the objectives of providing optimum recreational opportunities and maintaining the highest standards of environmental protection. In so doing, the department shall define and execute a program of management within the unit that shall perpetuate the unit's declared values, providing for golfing along with other compatible summer and winter recreation opportunities while restoring the natural character and ecological values of the upper Truckee River, protecting its water quality, and protecting and interpreting significant natural, cultural, and scientific values.

The current boundary of Lake Valley SRA was originally drawn to encompass the then-existing golf course. The remainder of the state land was placed in Washoe Meadows SP. The proposed classification adjustment will continue this approach of containing the reconfigured golf course in the state recreation area and implementing the purpose of that unit.

The classification of lands at the project site will be adjusted so that Lake Valley SRA will encompass the reconfigured golf course, including the golf holes relocated to the west side of the river, and Washoe Meadows SP will contain most of restored river corridor, except adjacent to the new bridge. The southern portion of an existing South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD) sewer access road also becomes part of the SRA.

The classification adjustment results in an exchange of land between the two units. The net change in acreage of the units after the classification adjustments is 40 acres, as shown in Table A-1 and exhibits 2 and 3.

Table A-1 Summary of Acreage Changes with Classification Adjustments			
Park Unit	Existing	Preferred Alternative	Net Change
Lake Valley SRA	155	195	+ 40
Washoe Meadows SP	628	588	- 40

With the adjustments to encompass the reconfigured golf course and the STPUD access road, 92.5 acres of mainly upland area are transferred from Washoe Meadows SP to Lake Valley SRA, and approximately 52.5 acres are transferred from the SRA to the SP along the river corridor. The total acreage included within the combination of Lake Valley SRA and Washoe Meadows SP does not change.

**GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT**

The General Plan recognizes the importance of both the golf course as a recreational opportunity and the need to restore the Upper Truckee River and its environs. As noted on page 34 of the General Plan, it is uncommon for a

golf course to be the primary feature within a unit of the State Park System. However, its classification as a state recreation area recognizes the significance of perpetuating the quality public golfing opportunity in the Tahoe Basin. The Declaration of Purpose is as follows: “The purpose of the Lake Valley SRA is to make available to the people for their enjoyment and inspiration the 18-hole golf course, and the scenic Upper Truckee River and it’s environs”

On pages 35 – 38 of the General Plan, the natural values of the river are discussed with recognition of the need to restore a balance in its natural geomorphic processes, including restoration of a natural channel configuration and riparian habitat. On pages 59 – 60 of the General Plan, it is recommended that the existing golf course (18 hole, 6700 yard) and winter recreational opportunities be continued. Amending the General Plan to reflect the proposed classification adjustment and boundary modification will be consistent with maintaining the significance of golf recreation opportunity and appropriate management of the river’s natural resources. The amendment is a necessary action for implementing the Preferred Alternative for the Upper Truckee River Restoration and Golf Course Reconfiguration Project, which is most consistent (among the other considered project alternatives) with both the river management and golf recreation opportunity provisions of the General Plan.

The Lake Valley SRA General Plan is amended to reflect the adjusted classification of land within the unit as implemented through a boundary modification. Otherwise, the purpose of the unit, objectives of the plan, and plan elements (Resource, Interpretive, Concession, Operations, Land Use, and Facilities) are not substantively modified. The classification adjustment is consistent with the unit’s purpose and objectives.

An updated General Plan vicinity map is provided in Exhibit A-1. The existing park unit boundaries are presented in Exhibit A-2. The adjusted classifications of the land in the park units are shown in Exhibits A-3, essentially “exchanging” land between Washoe Meadows SP and Lake Valley SRA, and realigning the boundaries between the two park units.

The adjusted classification boundary of Lake Valley SRA contains the reconfigured golf course and the existing STPUD sewer access road to encompass land uses of the Preferred Alternative layout that are consistent with the purpose and objectives of the Lake Valley SRA. They also contain the new, shared golf and dispersed recreation trail bridge across the Upper Truckee River and immediately adjacent land. The section of river remaining in the Lake Valley SRA in the vicinity of the new bridge allows room for defining the precise bridge alignment during the final design.

The adjusted classification of Washoe Meadows SP boundary contains most of the restored river corridor, except in the vicinity of the new Upper Truckee River Bridge. The area north of the river near Angora Creek and the adjacent area are changed from Lake Valley SRA to Washoe Meadows SP, as is much of the area adjacent to the river on the south. These areas that are currently golf course turf will be restored to native meadow vegetation. The northern section of Washoe Meadows SP which contains the rest of the wet meadow area associated with Angora creek as well as the fen area will continue to be part of Washoe Meadows SP.

The General Plan Amendment applies to the adjusted classification of land comprising Lake Valley SRA and its new boundaries, but does not include any plan elements for Washoe Meadows SP. The General Plan Amendment will allow for continuation of an 18 hole championship (regulation) golf course to continue within the SRA, while allowing room for the river restoration and improvements also called for in the General Plan. It will also allow for continuation of the winter recreation (snowmobile concession) on the driving range. Because no development is anticipated for Washoe Meadows SP, State Parks has not prepared a general plan for this unit. However the relocation of much of the river from the SRA into the SP will allow for greater recreational access to the river will provide space for a regionally connected trail along the river. The implementation of the Preferred Alternative will not include development of permanent facilities within the adjusted boundaries of Washoe Meadows SP, but dispersed activities such as hiking and cross-country skiing will continue.

In addition, the following cultural resources policy will be added to the general plan's Resources Management Element:

Cultural resources preservation planning. A cultural resources preservation/management plan that includes classification by the State Park and Recreation Commission of a cultural preserve to conserve site CA-ELD-555 will be developed to guide the SRA's management. Principal objectives of the plan will be to protect, manage, & interpret the site's archaeological and cultural resources, including establishment of a buffer between the site and the relocated golf course, to maintain appropriate access to the site for members of the Washoe tribe, and to acknowledge the Washoe people and interpret their use of the site. The cultural resource preservation & management plan, including its recommendations for the preserve, its name, and management, shall be developed in close coordination with the Washoe tribe and other stakeholders, such as historic preservation groups and archaeological avocational societies.

## ATTACHMENTS

Exhibit A-1 Vicinity Map

Exhibit A-2 Existing Unit Boundaries

Exhibit A-3 Adjusted Unit Boundaries

Exhibit A-1 Vicinity Map

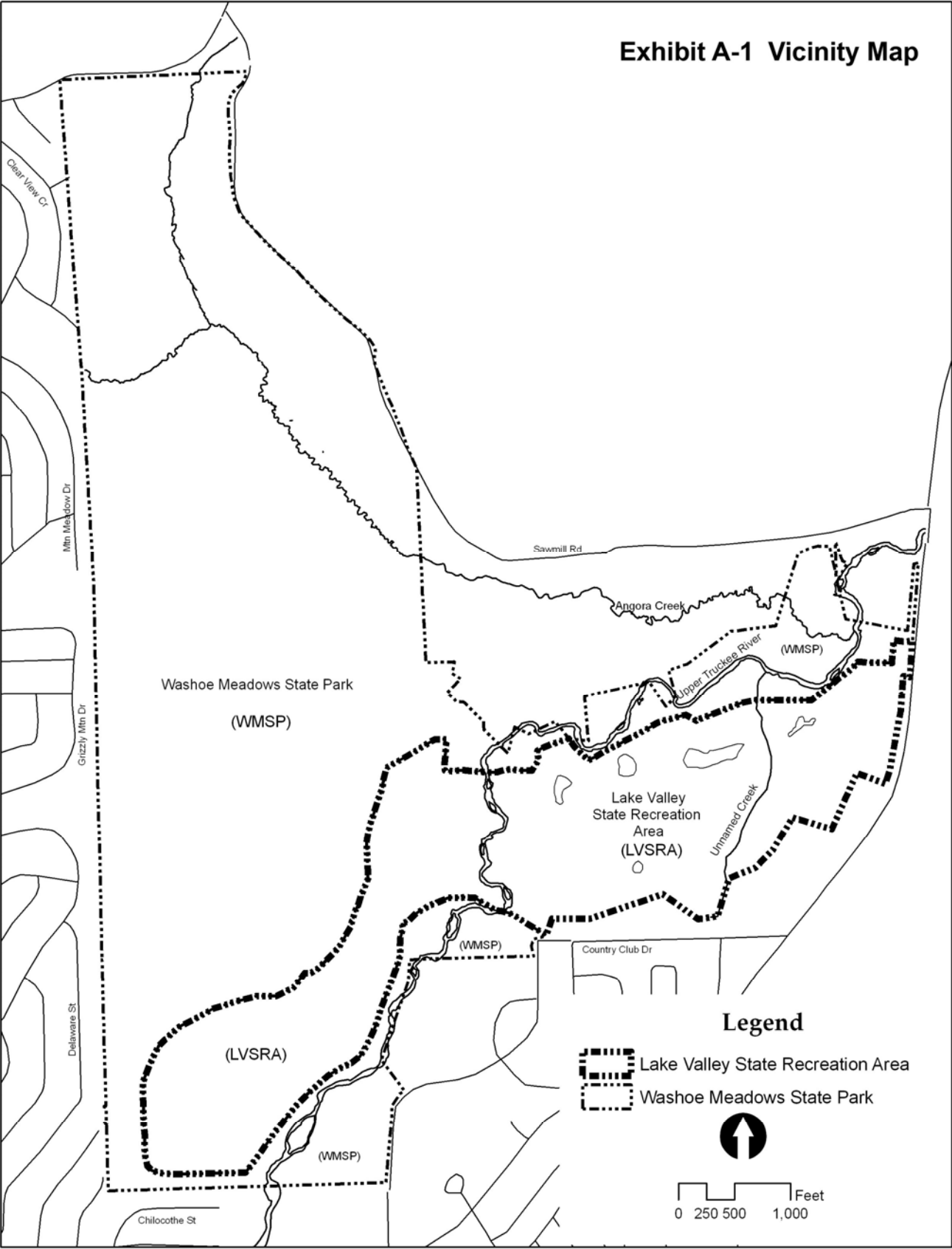


Exhibit A-1 Vicinity Map



